

Amendments to the Claims:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the present application.

Listing of Claims:

1. (Currently Amended) An interactive television program guide system in which program guide data is provided and wherein ~~at least some~~ a subset of the program guide data is current program guide data that is frequently ~~used~~ requested, the system comprising:

a continuous data stream processor configured to select from the program guide data the subset of current program guide data for inclusion in a continuous data stream;

distribution equipment configured to exclusively distribute the subset of current program guide data ~~selected by the continuous data stream processor~~ in the continuous data stream to user television equipment;

a program guide server; and

an interactive television program guide implemented on the user television equipment configured 1) to obtain the subset of current program guide data directly from the continuous data stream for inclusion in program guide displays on the user television equipment and 2) to obtain ~~at least some of the~~ program guide data other than the subset of current program guide data from the program guide server in

response to requests generated by the interactive television program guide.

2. (Original) The system defined in claim 1 wherein:

the current program guide data comprises one or more unique identifiers; and

the interactive television program guide is configured to perform a real-time action when a particular unique identifier is in the continuous data stream.

3. (Original) The system defined in claim 2 wherein:

the real-time action comprises displaying a program reminder for a program; and

the interactive television program guide is configured to display the program reminder for the program when a particular unique identifier is in the continuous data stream.

4. (Original) The system defined in claim 2 wherein:

the real-time action comprises displaying a program reminder; and

the interactive television program guide is configured to prefetch current program guide data from the continuous data stream when the reminder is displayed by the program guide.

5. (Original) The system defined in claim 2 wherein:

the real-time action comprises authorizing the viewing of a pay-per-view program; and

the interactive television program guide is configured to authorize the viewing of a pay-per-view program when a particular unique identifier is in the continuous data stream.

6. (Original) The system defined in claim 2 wherein:

the real-time action comprises authorizing a viewing of a pay-per-view-program; and

the interactive television program guide is configured to prefetch current program guide data from the continuous data stream when the viewing of the pay-per-view program is authorized by the program guide.

7. (Original) The system defined in claim 2 wherein:

the real-time action comprises recording a program; and

the interactive television program guide is configured to record a program when a particular unique identifier is in the continuous data stream.

8. (Original) The system defined in claim 2 wherein:

the real-time action comprises locking a program and prompting a user for a control code; and

the interactive television program guide is configured to lock a program and prompt the user for a control code when a particular identifier is in the continuous data stream.

9. (Original) The system defined in claim 2 wherein:

one or more of the one or more unique identifiers is a program grouping identifier;

the real-time action comprises displaying a program reminder for a program of a program grouping; and

the interactive television program guide is configured to display the program reminder for the program of a program grouping when a particular unique identifier of the

one or more unique identifiers is in the continuous data stream.

10. (Original) The system defined in claim 2 wherein:

one or more of the one or more unique identifiers is a program grouping identifier;

the real-time action comprises displaying a program reminder for a program of a program grouping; and

the interactive television program guide is configured to prefetch current program guide data from the continuous data stream when the reminder is displayed by the program guide.

11. (Original) The system defined in claim 2 wherein:

one or more of the one or more unique identifiers is a program grouping identifier;

the real-time action comprises authorizing the viewing of a pay-per-view program of a program grouping; and

the interactive television program guide is configured to authorize the viewing of a pay-per-view program of a program grouping when a particular unique identifier is in the continuous data stream.

12. (Original) The system defined in claim 2

wherein:

one or more of the one or more unique  
identifiers is a program grouping identifier;

the real-time action comprises authorizing a  
viewing of a pay-per-view-program of a program grouping; and

the interactive television program guide is  
configured to prefetch current program guide data from the  
continuous data stream when the viewing of the pay-per-view  
program of a program grouping is authorized by the program  
guide.

13. (Original) The system defined in claim 2

wherein:

one or more of the one or more unique  
identifiers is a program grouping identifier;

the real-time action comprises recording a  
program of a program grouping; and

the interactive television program guide is  
configured to record a program of a program grouping when a  
particular unique identifier is in the continuous data stream.

14. (Original) The system defined in claim 2

wherein:

one or more of the one or more unique identifiers is a program grouping identifier;

the real-time action comprises locking a program of a program grouping and prompting a user for a control code; and

the interactive television program guide is configured to lock a program of a program grouping and prompt the user for a control code when a particular identifier is in the continuous data stream.

15. (Original) The system defined in claim 1 wherein the continuous data stream processor obtains current program guide data from the program guide server.

16. (Original) The system defined in claim 1 wherein:

the continuous data stream processor prioritizes the current program guide data; and

the distribution equipment cycles the current program guide data in the continuous data stream according to how the current program guide data was prioritized by the continuous data stream processor.

17. (Original) The system defined in claim 1 wherein the program guide processes the current program guide data in real-time and with no data caching.

18. (Original) The system defined in claim 1 wherein the user television equipment comprises hardware filtering circuitry configured to filter current program guide data from the continuous data stream based on a tag.

19. (Original) The system defined in claim 1 wherein the program guide prefetches current program guide data from the continuous data stream.

20. (Original) The system defined in claim 1 wherein the program guide prefetches program guide data from the program guide server.

21. (Original) The system defined in claim 1 wherein:

the interactive television program guide is configured to invoke a remote procedure call on the program guide server; and

the program guide server is configured to provide the program guide data to the interactive television



program guide in response to the remote procedure call being invoked by the interactive television program guide.

22. (Original) The system defined in claim 1 wherein:

the interactive television program guide is configured to obtain program guide data from the program guide server using an object request broker; and

the program guide server is configured to provide program guide data to the interactive television program guide using the object request broker.

23. (Original) The system defined in claim 1 wherein:

the interactive television program guide is configured to obtain configuration information from the program guide server using one or more requests; and

the program guide server is configured to store configuration information and to provide the configuration information to the interactive television program guide in response to the one or more requests.

24. (Original) The system defined in claim 1 wherein:

the interactive television program guide is configured to obtain user settings from the program guide server using one or more requests; and

the program guide server is configured to store user settings and to provide the user settings to the program guide in response to the one or more requests.

25. (Original) The system defined in claim 1 wherein:

the current program guide data has one or more types; and

the program guide is configured to recognize the type of current program guide data carried in the continuous data stream and to obtain current program guide data from the continuous data stream when the current program guide data in the continuous data stream is a particular type.

26. (Original) The system defined in claim 1 wherein:

the current program guide data has one or more types; and

the program guide is configured to recognize the type of current program guide data carried in the continuous data stream and to obtain program guide data from

the program guide server when the current program guide data in the continuous data stream is not a particular type.

27. (Original) The system defined in claim 1 wherein the program guide is configured to obtain program guide data for a program of a particular category from the program guide server.

28. (Original) The system defined in claim 1 wherein the program guide is configured to obtain current program guide data from the continuous data stream for a program of a particular category.

29. (Original) The system defined in claim 1 wherein the program guide is configured to obtain current program guide data from the continuous data stream when a user indicates a desire to flip channels.

30. (Original) The system defined in claim 1 wherein the program guide is configured to (1) obtain current program guide data from the continuous data stream when a user indicates a desire to browse program listings data in a current time slot, and to (2) obtain program guide data from the program guide server when the user indicates a desire to

browse program listings data in time slots other than the current time slot.

31. (Original) The system defined in claim 1 wherein:

the program guide server is configured to provide program guide data to the continuous data stream processor; and

the continuous data stream processor is configured to receive program guide data from the program guide server and to select current program guide data for inclusion in the continuous data stream from the program guide data provided by the program guide server.

32. (Original) The system defined in claim 1 wherein:

the program guide server is configured to continuously provide program guide data to the continuous data stream processor; and

the continuous data stream processor is configured to continuously receive program guide data from the program guide server and to select current program guide data for inclusion in the continuous data stream from the program guide data provided by the program guide server.

33. (Original) The system defined in claim 1

wherein:

the program guide server is configured to periodically provide program guide data to the continuous data stream processor; and

the continuous data stream processor is configured to periodically receive program guide data from the program guide server and to select current program guide data for inclusion in the continuous data stream from the program guide data provided by the program guide server.

34. (Original) The system defined in claim 1

wherein:

the program guide server is configured to poll the continuous data stream processor and provide program guide data to the continuous data stream processor; and

the continuous data stream processor is configured to receive program guide data from the program guide server and to select current program guide data for inclusion in the continuous data stream from the program guide data provided by the program guide server.

35. (Original) The system defined in claim 1

wherein:

the program guide server is configured to provide program guide data to the continuous data stream processor in response to requests generated by the continuous data stream processor; and

the continuous data stream processor is configured to generate one or more requests for program guide data, provide the one or more requests to the program guide server, receive program guide data from the program guide server, and to select current program guide data for inclusion in the continuous data stream from the program guide data provided by the program guide server.

36. (Original) The system defined in claim 1 wherein:

the system further comprises a main facility configured to provide a continuous data stream of current program guide data; and

the continuous data stream distributed by the distribution equipment is the continuous data stream provided by the main facility.

37. (Original) The system defined in claim 1 wherein the continuous data stream processor is configured to select current program guide data from programmer provided in-band information.

38. (Original) The system defined in claim 1 wherein the continuous data stream processor is configured to localize program guide data provided by a main facility and to select the current program guide data for inclusion in a continuous data stream from the program guide data that is localized by the continuous data stream processor.

39. (Original) The system defined in claim 1 wherein:

- the program guide server is configured to localize program guide data provided by a main facility; and
- the distribution equipment is configured to distribute the program guide data that is localized by the program guide server.

40. (Original) The system defined in claim 1 wherein:

- the continuous data stream processor is configured to select the current program guide data for inclusion in a plurality of continuous data streams wherein each continuous data stream of the plurality of continuous data streams carries current program guide data for a particular program guide display screen;

the distribution equipment is configured to distribute the plurality of continuous data streams to the user television equipment; and

the interactive television program guide is configured to obtain current program guide data for a particular program guide display screen from the continuous data stream that carries current program guide data for that particular program guide display screen.

41. (Currently Amended) An interactive television program guide system in which program guide data is provided and wherein ~~at least some of the program guide data is one or more~~ includes unique identifiers associated with television programs, the system comprising:

a continuous data stream processor configured to select ~~one or more unique identifiers of the one or more unique identifiers~~ a particular unique identifier associated with a particular television program for inclusion in a continuous data stream;

distribution equipment configured to distribute the ~~one or more unique identifiers selected by the continuous data stream processor~~ particular unique identifier to [[the]] user television equipment in the continuous data stream only when the particular television program is currently being broadcasted; and



an interactive television program guide  
implemented on the user television equipment configured to  
~~obtain the one or more unique identifiers selected by the~~  
~~continuous data stream processor :~~

monitor the continuous data stream for the  
presence of the particular unique identifier, wherein the  
presence of the particular unique identifier indicates when  
the particular television program is being currently  
broadcasted; and

[[to]] perform a real-time action  
associated with a ~~television program identified by a~~  
~~particular unique identifier~~ the particular television program  
when the particular unique identifier is detected in the  
continuous data stream, ~~wherein the particular unique~~  
~~identifier is distributed in the continuous data stream when~~  
~~the television program is being broadcast.~~

42. (Currently Amended) The system defined in  
claim 41 wherein:

the real-time action comprises displaying a  
program reminder for [[a]] the particular television program,  
and

~~the interactive television program guide is~~  
~~configured to display the program reminder for the program~~

~~when a particular unique identifier of the one or more unique identifiers is in the continuous data stream.~~

43. (Currently Amended) The system defined in claim 41 wherein:

the real-time action comprises displaying a program reminder for the particular television program; and

the interactive television program guide is configured to prefetch current program guide data from the continuous data stream when the reminder is displayed by the program guide.

44. (Currently Amended) The system defined in claim 41 wherein:

the real-time action comprises authorizing the viewing of the particular television program, wherein the program is a pay-per-view program; and

~~the interactive television program guide is configured to authorize the viewing of a pay per-view program when a particular unique identifier is in the continuous data stream.~~

45. (Currently Amended) The system defined in claim 41 wherein:

the real-time action comprises authorizing a viewing of the particular television program, wherein the program is a pay-per-view-program; and

the interactive television program guide is configured to prefetch current program guide data from the continuous data stream when the viewing of the pay-per-view program is authorized by the program guide.

46. (Currently Amended) The system defined in claim 41 wherein:

the real-time action comprises recording ~~[[a]]~~  
the particular television program; and

~~the interactive television program guide is configured to record a program when a particular unique identifier is in the continuous data stream.~~

47. (Currently Amended) The system defined in claim 41 wherein:

the real-time action comprises locking ~~[[a]]~~  
the particular television program and prompting a user for a control code; and

~~the interactive television program guide is configured to lock a program and prompt the user for a control code when a particular identifier is in the continuous data stream.~~

48. (Currently Amended) The system defined in claim 41 wherein:

one or more of the ~~one or more~~ unique identifiers is a program grouping identifier; and

the real-time action comprises displaying a program reminder for ~~[[a]]~~ the particular television program, wherein the program is of a program grouping; ~~and~~

~~the interactive television program guide is configured to display the program reminder for the program of a program grouping when a particular unique identifier of the one or more unique identifiers is in the continuous data stream.~~

49. (Currently Amended) The system defined in claim 41 wherein:

one or more of the ~~one or more~~ unique identifiers is a program grouping identifier;

the real-time action comprises displaying a program reminder for ~~[[a]]~~ the particular television program, wherein the program is of a program grouping; and

the interactive television program guide is configured to prefetch current program guide data from the continuous data stream when the reminder is displayed by the program guide.

50. (Currently Amended) The system defined in claim 41 wherein:

one or more of the ~~one or more~~ unique identifiers is a program grouping identifier; and

the real-time action comprises authorizing the viewing of the particular television program, wherein the program is a pay-per-view program of a program grouping; ~~and~~

~~the interactive television program guide is configured to authorize the viewing of a pay-per-view program of a program grouping when a particular unique identifier is in the continuous data stream.~~

51. (Currently Amended) The system defined in claim 41 wherein:

one or more of the ~~one or more~~ unique identifiers is a program grouping identifier;

the real-time action comprises authorizing a viewing of the particular television program, wherein the program is a pay-per-view-program of a program grouping; and

the interactive television program guide is configured to prefetch current program guide data from the continuous data stream when the viewing of the pay-per-view program of a program grouping is authorized by the program guide.

52. (Currently Amended) The system defined in claim 41 wherein:

one or more of the ~~one or more~~ unique identifiers is a program grouping identifier; and

the real-time action comprises recording [[a]] the particular television program, wherein the program is of a program grouping; ~~and~~

~~the interactive television program guide is configured to record a program of a program grouping when a particular unique identifier is in the continuous data stream.~~

53. (Currently Amended) The system defined in claim 41 wherein:

one or more of the ~~one or more~~ unique identifiers is a program grouping identifier; and

the real-time action comprises locking [[a]] the particular television program of a program grouping and prompting a user for a control code; ~~and~~

~~the interactive television program guide is configured to lock a program of a program grouping and prompt the user for a control code when a particular identifier is in the continuous data stream, wherein the program is of a program grouping.~~

54-56. (Canceled)

57. (Currently Amended) An interactive television program guide system in which program guide data is provided to an interactive television program guide implemented on user television equipment and wherein ~~at least some~~ a subset of the program guide data is current program guide data that is frequently ~~used~~ requested, the system comprising:

means for selecting from the program guide data the subset of current program guide data for inclusion in a continuous data stream;

means for exclusively distributing the subset of current program guide data ~~selected by the means for selecting to the user television equipment~~ in the continuous data stream;

means for providing program guide data to the interactive television program guide implemented on the user television equipment using a client-server based approach; and

means for 1) obtaining the subset of current program guide data directly from the continuous data stream for inclusion in program guide displays on the user television equipment and ~~to obtain~~ 2) obtaining program guide data other than the subset of current program guide data from the means for providing program guide data ~~using the interactive television program guide implemented on the user television~~

equipment in response to requests generated by the interactive television program guide.

58. (Original) The system defined in claim 57 wherein:

the current program guide data comprises one or more unique identifiers; and

the means for obtaining current program guide data and program guide data using the interactive television program guide comprises means for performing a real-time action when a particular unique identifier is in the continuous data stream.

59. (Original) The system defined in claim 58 wherein:

the real-time action comprises displaying a program reminder for a program; and

the means for performing a real-time action comprises means for displaying the program reminder for the program when a particular unique identifier of the one or more unique identifiers is in the continuous data stream.

60. (Original) The system defined in claim 58 wherein:

the real-time action comprises displaying a program reminder; and



the means for performing a real-time action comprises means for prefetching the current program guide data from the continuous data stream when the reminder is displayed by the means for performing a real-time action.

61. (Original) The system defined in claim 58 wherein:

the real-time action comprises authorizing the viewing of a pay-per-view program; and

the means for performing a real-time action comprises means for authorizing the viewing of a pay-per-view program when a particular unique identifier is in the continuous data stream.

62. (Original) The system defined in claim 58 wherein:

the real-time action comprises authorizing a viewing of a pay-per-view-program; and

the means for performing a real-time action comprises means for prefetching current program guide data from the continuous data stream when the viewing of the pay-per-view program is authorized by the means for performing a real-time action.

63. (Original) The system defined in claim 58  
wherein:

the real-time action comprises recording a  
program; and

the means for performing a real-time action  
comprises means for recording a program when a particular  
unique identifier is in the continuous data stream.

64. (Original) The system defined in claim 58  
wherein:

the real-time action comprises locking a  
program and prompting a user for a control code; and

the means for performing a real-time action  
comprises means for locking a program and prompting the user  
for a control code when a particular identifier is in the  
continuous data stream.

65. (Original) The system defined in claim 58  
wherein:

one or more of the one or more unique  
identifiers is a program grouping identifier;

the real-time action comprises displaying a  
program reminder for a program of a program grouping; and

the means for performing a real-time action  
comprises means for displaying the program reminder for the

program of a program grouping when a particular unique identifier is in the continuous data stream.

66. (Original) The system defined in claim 58 wherein:

one or more of the one or more unique identifiers is a program grouping identifier;  
the real-time action comprises displaying a program reminder for a program of a program grouping; and  
the means for performing a real-time action comprises means for prefetching current program guide data from the continuous data stream when the reminder is displayed by the means for performing a real-time action.

67. (Original) The system defined in claim 58 wherein:

one or more of the one or more unique identifiers is a program grouping identifier;  
the real-time action comprises authorizing the viewing of a pay-per-view program of a program grouping; and  
the means for performing a real-time action comprises means for authorizing the viewing of a pay-per-view program of a program grouping when a particular unique identifier is in the continuous data stream.

68. (Original) The system defined in claim 58

wherein:

one or more of the one or more unique  
identifiers is a program grouping identifier;

the real-time action comprises authorizing a  
viewing of a pay-per-view-program of a program grouping; and

the means for performing a real-time action  
comprises means for prefetching current program guide data  
from the continuous data stream when the viewing of the pay-  
per-view program of a program grouping is authorized by the  
means for performing a real-time action.

69. (Original) The system defined in claim 58

wherein:

one or more of the one or more unique  
identifiers is a program grouping identifier;

the real-time action comprises recording a  
program of a program grouping; and

the means for performing a real-time action  
comprises means for recording a program of a program grouping  
when a particular unique identifier is in the continuous data  
stream.

70. (Original) The system defined in claim 58

wherein:

one or more of the one or more unique identifiers is a program grouping identifier;

the real-time action comprises locking a program of a program grouping and prompting a user for a control code; and

the means for performing a real-time action comprises means for locking a program of a program grouping and prompting the user for a control code when a particular identifier is in the continuous data stream.

71. (Original) The system defined in claim 57 wherein the means for selecting obtains current program guide data from the means for providing program guide data using a client-server based approach.

72. (Original) The system defined in claim 57 wherein:

the means for selecting comprises means for prioritizing the current program guide data; and

the means for distributing comprises means for cycling the current program guide data in the continuous data stream according to how the current program guide data was prioritized by the means for selecting.

73. (Original) The system defined in claim 57 wherein:

the means for obtaining current program guide data and program guide data using the interactive television program guide comprises means for processing the current program guide data in real-time and with no data caching.

74. (Original) The system defined in claim 57 wherein the user television equipment comprises means for filtering current program guide data from the continuous data stream based on a tag.

75. (Original) The system defined in claim 57 wherein the means for obtaining current program guide data and program guide data using the interactive television program guide comprises means for prefetching current program guide data from the continuous data stream.

76. (Original) The system defined in claim 57 wherein the means for obtaining current program guide data and program guide data using the interactive television program guide comprises means for prefetching program guide data from the means for providing program guide data using a client-server based approach.

77. (Original) The system defined in claim 57

wherein:

the means for obtaining current program guide data and program guide data using the interactive television program guide comprises means for invoking a remote procedure call on the means for providing program guide data using a client-server based approach; and

the means providing program guide data using a client-server based approach comprises means for providing the program guide data to the means for obtaining current program guide data and program guide data using the interactive television program guide in response to the remote procedure call being invoked.

78. (Original) The system defined in claim 57

wherein:

the means for obtaining current program guide data and program guide data using the interactive television program guide comprises means for using an object request broker to obtain program guide data from the means for providing program guide data using a client-server bases approach; and

the means for providing program guide data using a client-server based approach comprises means for providing program guide data to the means for obtaining

current program guide data and program guide data using the interactive television program guide using the object request broker.

79. (Original) The system defined in claim 57 wherein:

the means for obtaining current program guide data and program guide data using the interactive television program guide comprises means for obtaining configuration information from the means for providing program guide data using a client-server based approach using one or more requests; and

the means for providing program guide data using a client-server based approach comprises means for storing configuration information and providing the configuration information to the means for obtaining current program guide data and program guide data using the interactive television program guide in response to the one or more requests.

80. (Original) The system defined in claim 57 wherein:

the means for obtaining current program guide data and program guide data using the interactive television program guide comprises means for obtaining user settings from



the means for providing program guide data using a client-server based approach using one or more requests; and

the means for providing program guide data using a client-server based approach comprises means for storing user settings and for providing the user settings to the means for obtaining current program guide data and program guide data using the interactive television program guide in response to the one or more requests.

81. (Original) The system defined in claim 57 wherein:

the current program guide data has one or more types; and

the means for obtaining current program guide data and program guide data using the interactive television program guide comprises means for recognizing the type of current program guide data carried in the continuous data stream and for obtaining current program guide data from the continuous data stream when the current program guide data in the continuous data stream is a particular type.

82. (Original) The system defined in claim 57 wherein:

the current program guide data has one or more types; and

the means for obtaining current program guide data and program guide data using the interactive television program guide comprises means for recognizing the type of current program guide data carried in the continuous data stream and for obtaining program guide data from the means for providing program guide data using a client-server based approach when the current program guide data in the continuous data stream is not a particular type.

83. (Original) The system defined in claim 57 wherein the means for obtaining current program guide data and program guide data using the interactive television program guide comprises means for obtaining program guide data for a program of a particular category from the means for providing program guide data using a client-server based approach.

84. (Original) The system defined in claim 57 wherein the means for obtaining current program guide data and program guide data using the interactive television program guide comprises means for obtaining current program guide data from the continuous data stream for a program of a particular category.

85. (Original) The system defined in claim 57 wherein the means for obtaining current program guide data and

program guide data using the interactive television program guide comprises means for obtaining current program guide data from the continuous data stream when a user indicates a desire to flip channels.

86. (Original) The system defined in claim 57 wherein the means for obtaining current program guide data and program guide data using the interactive television program guide comprises:

means for obtaining current program guide data from the continuous data stream when a user indicates a desire to browse program listings data in a current time slot; and

means for obtaining program guide data from the means for providing program guide data using a client-server based approach when the user indicates a desire to browse program listings data in time slots other than the current time slot.

87. (Original) The system defined in claim 57 wherein:

the means for providing program guide data using a client-server based approach comprises means for providing program guide data to the means for selecting current program guide data; and

the means for selecting current program guide data comprises means for receiving program guide data from the means for providing program guide data using a client-server based approach and for selecting current program guide data for inclusion in the continuous data stream from the program guide data provided by the means for providing program guide data using a client-server based approach.

88. (Original) The system defined in claim 57 wherein:

the means for providing program guide data using a client-server based approach comprises means for continuously providing program guide data to the means for selecting current program guide data; and

the means for selecting current program guide data comprises means for continuously receiving program guide data from the means for providing program guide data using a client-server based approach and for selecting current program guide data for inclusion in the continuous data stream from the program guide data provided by the means for providing program guide data using a client-server based approach.

89. (Original) The system defined in claim 57 wherein:

the means for providing program guide data using a client-server based approach comprises means for periodically providing program guide data to the means for selecting current program guide data; and

the means for selecting current program guide data comprises means for periodically receiving program guide data from the program guide server and for selecting current program guide data for inclusion in the continuous data stream from the program guide data provided by the means for providing program guide data using a client-server based approach.

90. (Original) The system defined in claim 57 wherein:

the means for providing program guide data using a client-server based approach comprises means for polling the means for selecting current program guide data and providing program guide data to the means for selecting current program guide data; and

the means for selecting current program guide data comprises means for receiving program guide data from the means for providing program guide data using a client-server based approach and for selecting current program guide data for inclusion in the continuous data stream from the program

guide data provided by the means for providing program guide data using a client-server based approach.

91. (Original) The system defined in claim 57 wherein:

the means for providing program guide data using a client-server based approach comprises means for providing program guide data to the means for selecting current program guide data in response to requests generated by the means for selecting current program guide data; and

the means for selecting current program guide data comprises means for generating one or more requests for program guide data, providing the one or more requests to the means for providing program guide data using a client-server based approach, receiving program guide data from the means for providing program guide data using a client-server based approach, and selecting current program guide data for inclusion in the continuous data stream from the program guide data provided by the means for providing program guide data using a client-server based approach.

92. (Original) The system defined in claim 57 wherein:

the system further comprises means for providing a continuous data stream of current program guide

data to the means for selecting current program guide data;  
and

the continuous data stream distributed by the means for distributing is the continuous data stream provided by the means for providing a continuous data stream of current program guide data to the means for selecting current program guide data.

93. (Original) The system defined in claim 57 wherein the means for selecting current program guide data is configured to select current program guide data from programmer provided in-band information.

94. (Original) The system defined in claim 57 wherein the means for selecting current program guide data comprises means for localizing program guide data provided by a means for providing a continuous data stream of current program guide data and for selecting the current program guide data for inclusion in a continuous data stream from the program guide data that is localized by the means for selecting current program guide data.

95. (Original) The system defined in claim 57 wherein:

the means for selecting current program guide data is configured to select the current program guide data for inclusion in a plurality of continuous data streams wherein each continuous data stream of the plurality of continuous data streams carries current program guide data for a particular program guide display screen;

the means for distributing comprises means for distributing the plurality of continuous data streams to the means for obtaining current program guide data and program guide data using the interactive television program guide; and

the means for obtaining current program guide data and program guide data using the interactive television program guide comprises means for obtaining current program guide data for a particular program guide display screen from the continuous data stream that carries current program guide data for that particular program guide display screen.

96. (Currently Amended) An interactive television program guide system in which program guide data is provided to an interactive television program guide implemented on user television equipment and wherein ~~at least some of the program guide data is one or more~~ includes unique identifiers associated with television programs, the system comprising:

means for selecting ~~one or more unique identifiers of the one or more unique identifiers~~ a particular



unique identifier associated with a particular television program for inclusion in a continuous data stream;

~~means for distributing the one or more unique identifiers selected by the means for selecting particular~~  
unique identifier to the user television equipment in the continuous data stream only when the particular television program is being currently broadcasted; and

~~means using the interactive television program guide for obtaining the one or more unique identifiers selected by the means for selecting~~ for monitoring the continuous data stream for the presence of the particular unique identifier, wherein the presence of the particular unique identifier indicates when the particular television program is being currently broadcasted; and

means for performing a real-time action associated with a ~~television program identified by a particular unique identifier~~ the particular television program when the particular unique identifier is detected in the continuous data stream, ~~wherein the particular unique identifier is distributed in the continuous data stream when the television program is being broadcast.~~

97. (Currently Amended) The system defined in claim 96 wherein:

~~the real-time action comprises displaying a  
program reminder for a program; and~~

the means for performing a real-time action  
comprises means for displaying the program reminder for the  
particular television program ~~when a particular unique  
identifier of the one or more unique identifiers is in the  
continuous data stream.~~

98. (Currently Amended) The system defined in  
claim 96 wherein:

~~the real-time action comprises displaying a  
program reminder; and~~

the means for performing a real-time action  
comprises means for displaying a program reminder for the  
particular television program and prefetching ~~[[the]]~~ current  
program guide data from the continuous data stream when the  
reminder is displayed ~~by the means for performing a real-time  
action.~~

99. (Currently Amended) Th e system defined in  
claim 96 wherein:

~~the real-time action comprises authorizing the  
viewing of a pay per view program; and~~

the means for performing a real-time action  
comprises means for authorizing the viewing of the particular

television program, wherein the program is a pay-per-view  
~~program when a particular unique identifier is in the~~  
~~continuous data stream.~~

100. (Currently Amended) The system defined in  
claim 96 wherein:

~~the real-time action comprises authorizing a~~  
~~viewing of a pay per view program; and~~

the means for performing a real-time action  
comprises means for authorizing a viewing of the particular  
television program, wherein the program is a pay-per-view  
program, and means for prefetching current program guide data  
from the continuous data stream when the viewing of the pay-  
per-view program is authorized ~~by the means for performing a~~  
~~real-time action.~~

101. (Currently Amended) The system defined in  
claim 96 wherein:

~~the real-time action comprises recording a~~  
~~program; and~~

the means for performing a real-time action  
comprises means for recording ~~[[a]]~~ the particular television  
program when a particular unique identifier is in the  
~~continuous data stream.~~

102. (Currently Amended) The system defined in claim 96 wherein:

~~the real-time action comprises locking a program and prompting a user for a control code; and~~

the means for performing a real-time action comprises means for locking ~~[[a]]~~ the particular television program and prompting the user for a control code ~~when a particular identifier is in the continuous data stream.~~

103. (Currently Amended) The system defined in claim 96 wherein:

one or more of the ~~one or more~~ unique identifiers is a program grouping identifier;

~~the real-time action comprises displaying a program reminder for a program of a program grouping; and~~

the means for performing a real-time action comprises means for displaying ~~[[the]]~~ a program reminder for the particular television program, wherein the program is of a program grouping ~~when a particular unique identifier is in the continuous data stream.~~

104. (Currently Amended) The system defined in claim 96 wherein:

one or more of the ~~one or more~~ unique identifiers is a program grouping identifier;

~~the real-time action comprises displaying a program reminder for a program of a program grouping; and~~

the means for performing a real-time action comprises means for displaying a program reminder for the particular television program, wherein the program is of a program grouping, and means for prefetching current program guide data from the continuous data stream when the reminder is displayed ~~by the means for performing a real-time action.~~

105. (Currently Amended) The system defined in claim 96 wherein:

one or more of the ~~one or more~~ unique identifiers is a program grouping identifier;

~~the real-time action comprises authorizing the viewing of a pay per view program of a program grouping; and~~

the means for performing a real-time action comprises means for authorizing ~~[[the]]~~ a viewing of the particular television program, wherein the program is a pay-per-view program of a program grouping ~~when a particular unique identifier is in the continuous data stream.~~

106. (Currently Amended) The system defined in claim 96 wherein:

one or more of the ~~one or more~~ unique identifiers is a program grouping identifier;

~~the real-time action comprises authorizing a viewing of a pay per-view program of a program grouping; and~~

the means for performing a real-time action comprises means for authorizing a viewing of the particular television program, wherein the program is a pay-per-view program of a program grouping, and means for prefetching current program guide data from the continuous data stream when the viewing of the pay-per-view program of a program grouping is authorized ~~by the means for performing a real-time action.~~

107. (Currently Amended) The system defined in claim 96 wherein:

one or more of the ~~one or more~~ unique identifiers is a program grouping identifier;

~~the real-time action comprises recording a program of a program grouping; and~~

the means for performing a real-time action comprises means for recording ~~[[a]]~~ the particular television program, wherein the program is of a program grouping ~~when a particular unique identifier is in the continuous data stream.~~

108. (Currently Amended) The system defined in claim 96 wherein:

one or more of the ~~one or more~~ unique  
identifiers is a program grouping identifier;  
~~the real-time action comprises locking a  
program of a program grouping and prompting a user for a  
control code; and~~

the means for performing a real-time action  
comprises means for locking [[a]] the particular television  
~~program of a program grouping~~ and prompting the user for a  
control code ~~when a particular identifier is in the continuous  
data stream~~ , wherein the program is of a program grouping.

109-111. (Canceled)

112. (Currently Amended) A method in an interactive  
television program guide system in which program guide data is  
provided to an interactive television program guide  
implemented on user television equipment and wherein ~~at least~~  
~~some~~ a subset of the program guide data is current program  
guide data that is frequently used requested, the method  
comprising:

selecting from the program guide data the  
subset of current program guide data for inclusion in a  
continuous data stream using a continuous data stream  
processor;

exclusively distributing the ~~selected~~ subset of current program guide data to the user television equipment in the continuous data stream;

providing program guide data to the interactive television program guide implemented on the user television equipment using a program guide server; and

obtaining, using the interactive television program guide, 1) the subset of current program guide data directly from the continuous data stream for inclusion in program guide displays on the user television equipment and 2) program guide data other than the subset of current program guide data from the program guide server ~~using the interactive television program guide implemented on the user television equipment~~ in response to requests generated by the interactive television program guide.

113. (Original) The method defined in claim 112 wherein:

the current program guide data comprises one or more unique identifiers; and

the method further comprises performing a real-time action using the interactive television program guide when a particular unique identifier is in the continuous data stream.



114. (Original) The method defined in claim 113

wherein:

the real-time action comprises displaying a program reminder for a program; and

the method further comprises using the interactive television program guide to display the program reminder for the program when a particular unique identifier of the one or more unique identifiers is in the continuous data stream.

115. (Original) The method defined in claim 113

wherein:

the real-time action comprises displaying a program reminder; and

the method further comprises using the interactive television program guide to prefetch current program guide data from the continuous data stream when the reminder is displayed by the program guide.

116. (Original) The method defined in claim 113

wherein:

the real-time action comprises authorizing the viewing of a pay-per-view program; and

the method further comprises using the interactive television program guide to authorize the viewing

of a pay-per-view program when a particular unique identifier is in the continuous data stream.

117. (Original) The method defined in claim 113 wherein:

the real-time action comprises authorizing a viewing of a pay-per-view-program; and

the method further comprises using the interactive television program guide to prefetch current program guide data from the continuous data stream when the viewing of the pay-per-view program is authorized by the program guide.

118. (Original) The method defined in claim 113 wherein:

the real-time action comprises recording a program; and

the method further comprises using the interactive television program guide to record a program when a particular unique identifier is in the continuous data stream.

119. (Original) The method defined in claim 113 wherein:

the real-time action comprises locking a program and prompting a user for a control code; and

the method further comprises using the interactive television program guide to lock a program and prompt the user for a control code when a particular identifier is in the continuous data stream.

120. (Original) The method defined in claim 113 wherein:

one or more of the one or more unique identifiers is a program grouping identifier;

the real-time action comprises displaying a program reminder for a program of a program grouping; and

the method further comprises using the interactive television program guide to display the program reminder for the program of a program grouping when a particular unique identifier of the one or more unique identifiers is in the continuous data stream.

121. (Original) The method defined in claim 113 wherein:

one or more of the one or more unique identifiers is a program grouping identifier;

the real-time action comprises displaying a program reminder for a program of a program grouping; and

the method further comprises using the interactive television program guide to prefetch current program guide data from the continuous data stream when the reminder is displayed by the program guide.

122. (Original) The method defined in claim 113 wherein:

one or more of the one or more unique identifiers is a program grouping identifier;  
the real-time action comprises authorizing the viewing of a pay-per-view program of a program grouping; and  
the method further comprises using the interactive television program guide to authorize the viewing of a pay-per-view program of a program grouping when a particular unique identifier is in the continuous data stream.

123. (Original) The method defined in claim 113 wherein:

one or more of the one or more unique identifiers is a program grouping identifier;  
the real-time action comprises authorizing a viewing of a pay-per-view-program of a program grouping; and  
the method further comprises using the interactive television program guide to prefetch current program guide data from the continuous data stream when the

viewing of the pay-per-view program of a program grouping is authorized by the program guide.

124. (Original) The method defined in claim 113 wherein:

one or more of the one or more unique identifiers is a program grouping identifier;

the real-time action comprises recording a program of a program grouping; and

the method further comprises using the interactive television program guide to record a program of a program grouping when a particular unique identifier is in the continuous data stream.

125. (Original) The method defined in claim 113 wherein:

one or more of the one or more unique identifiers is a program grouping identifier;

the real-time action comprises locking a program of a program grouping and prompting a user for a control code; and

the method further comprises using the interactive television program guide to lock a program of a program grouping and prompt the user for a control code when a particular identifier is in the continuous data stream.

126. (Original) The method defined in claim 112 further comprising providing program guide data from the program guide server to the continuous data stream processor.

127. (Original) The method defined in claim 112 further comprising:

- prioritizing the current program guide data;
- and
- cycling the current program guide data in the continuous data stream according to how the current program listings data was prioritized.

128. (Original) The method defined in claim 112 further comprising processing the current program guide data in real-time and with no data caching using the interactive television program guide.

129. (Original) The method defined in claim 112 further comprising filtering current program guide data from the continuous data stream based on a tag.

130. (Original) The method defined in claim 112 further comprising prefetching current program guide data from the continuous data stream using the interactive television program guide.

131. (Original) The method defined in claim 112 further comprising prefetching program guide data from the program guide server using the interactive television program guide.

132. (Original) The method defined in claim 112 wherein:

obtaining current program guide data and program guide data comprises invoking a remote procedure call on the program guide server using the interactive television program guide; and

providing program guide data using a program guide server comprises providing program guide data in response to the remote procedure call being invoked on the program guide server.

133. (Original) The method defined in claim 112 wherein:

obtaining current program guide data and program guide data comprises using an object request broker to obtain program guide data from the program guide server; and

providing program guide data using a program guide server comprises providing program guide data using the object request broker.

134. (Original) The method defined in claim 112 wherein:

obtaining current program guide data and program guide data using the interactive television program guide comprises obtaining configuration information from the program guide server using one or more requests; and

providing program guide data using a program guide server comprises storing configuration information and providing the configuration information to the interactive television program guide in response to the one or more requests.

135. (Original) The method defined in claim 112 wherein:

obtaining current program guide data and program guide data using the interactive television program guide comprises obtaining user settings from the program guide server using one or more requests; and

providing program guide data using a program guide server comprises storing user settings and providing the user settings to the interactive television program guide in response to the one or more requests.

136. (Original) The method defined in claim 112 wherein:



the current program guide data has one or more types; and

obtaining current program guide data and program guide data using the interactive television program guide comprises recognizing the type of current program guide data carried in the continuous data stream and obtaining current program guide data from the continuous data stream when the current program guide data in the continuous data stream is a particular type.

137. (Original) The method defined in claim 112 wherein:

the current program guide data has one or more types; and

obtaining current program guide data and program guide data using the interactive television program guide comprises recognizing the type of current program guide data carried in the continuous data stream and obtaining program guide data from the program guide server when the current program guide data in the continuous data stream is not a particular type.

138. (Original) The method defined in claim 112 wherein obtaining current program guide data and program guide data using the interactive television program guide comprises

obtaining program guide data for a program of a particular category from the program guide server.

139. (Original) The method defined in claim 112 wherein obtaining current program guide data and program guide data using the interactive television program guide comprises obtaining current program guide data from the continuous data stream for a program of a particular category.

140. (Original) The method defined in claim 112 wherein obtaining current program guide data and program guide data using the interactive television program guide comprises obtaining current program guide data from the continuous data stream when a user indicates a desire to flip channels.

141. (Original) The method defined in claim 112 wherein obtaining current program guide data and program guide data using the interactive television program guide comprises:

obtaining current program guide data from the continuous data stream when a user indicates a desire to browse program listings data in a current time slot; and

obtaining program guide data from the program guide server when the user indicates a desire to browse program listings data in time slots other than the current time slot.

142. (Original) The method defined in claim 112

wherein:

the method further comprises providing program guide data from the program guide server to the continuous data stream processor; and

selecting current program guide data for inclusion in the continuous data stream comprises selecting current program guide data from the program guide data provided by the program guide server.

143. (Original) The system defined in claim 112

wherein:

the method further comprises continuously providing program guide data from the program guide server to the continuous data stream processor; and

selecting current program guide data for inclusion in the continuous data stream comprises selecting current program guide data from the program guide data provided by the program guide server.

144. (Original) The method defined in claim 112

wherein:

the method further comprises periodically providing program guide data from the program guide server to the continuous data stream processor; and

selecting current program guide data for inclusion in the continuous data stream comprises selecting current program data from the program guide data provided by the program guide server.

145. (Original) The method defined in claim 112 wherein:

the method further comprises polling the continuous data stream processor and providing program guide data from the program guide server to the continuous data stream processor; and

selecting current program guide data for inclusion in the continuous data stream comprises selecting current program data from the program guide data provided by the program guide server.

146. (Original) The method defined in claim 112 wherein:

the method further comprises:

providing program guide data from the program guide server to the continuous data stream processor in response to requests generated by the continuous data stream processor;

generating one or more requests for program guide data with the continuous data stream processor;

providing the one or more requests to the  
program guide server;  
receiving program guide data from the program  
guide server; and  
wherein selecting current program guide data  
for inclusion in the continuous data stream comprises  
selecting current program data from the program guide data  
provided by the program guide server.

147. (Original) The method defined in claim 112  
wherein:

the method further comprises providing a  
continuous data stream of current program guide data from a  
main facility; and

distributing the continuous data stream  
comprises distributing the continuous data stream provided by  
the main facility.

148. (Original) The method defined in claim 112  
wherein:

selecting current program guide data comprises  
selecting current program guide data from programmer provided  
in-band information.

149. (Original) The method defined in claim 112 further comprising localizing program guide data provided by a main facility using the continuous data stream processor; and wherein selecting the current program guide data for inclusion in a continuous data stream comprises selecting current program guide data from program guide data that is localized by the continuous data stream processor.

150. (Original) The method defined in claim 112 wherein:  
the method further comprises localizing program guide data provided by a main facility using the program guide server; and

wherein distributing current program guide data comprises distributing current program guide data that is localized by the program guide server.

151. (Original) The method defined in claim 112 wherein:

selecting program guide data comprises selecting current program guide data for inclusion in a plurality of continuous data streams wherein each continuous data stream of the plurality of continuous data streams carries current program guide data for a particular program guide display screen;

distributing the current program guide data comprises distributing the plurality of continuous data streams to the user television equipment; and

the method further comprises obtaining current program guide data for a particular program guide display screen from the continuous data stream that carries current program guide data for that particular program guide display screen using the interactive television program guide.

152. (Currently Amended) A method in an interactive television program guide system in which program guide data is provided to an interactive television program guide implemented on user television equipment and wherein ~~at least some of the program guide data is one or more~~ includes unique identifiers associated with television programs, the system method comprising:

~~selecting one or more unique identifiers of the one or more unique identifiers~~ a particular unique identifier associated with a particular television program for inclusion in a continuous data stream ~~using a continuous data stream processor~~;

distributing the ~~one or more unique identifiers selected by the continuous data stream processor~~ particular unique identifier to the user television equipment in the

continuous data stream only when the particular television program is being currently broadcasted;

~~obtaining the one or more unique identifiers selected by the continuous data stream processor using the interactive television program guide~~ monitoring the continuous data stream for the presence of the particular unique identifier, wherein the presence of the particular unique identifier indicates when the particular television program is being currently broadcasted; and

performing a real-time action associated with a television program identified by a particular unique identifier the particular television program when the particular unique identifier is detected in the continuous data stream ~~using the interactive television program guide, wherein the particular unique identifier is distributed in the continuous data stream when the television program is being broadcast.~~

153. (Currently Amended) The method defined in claim 152 wherein:

the real-time action comprises displaying a program reminder for ~~[[a]]~~ the particular television program, and

~~the method further comprises using the interactive television program guide to display the program~~



~~reminder for the program when a particular unique identifier of the one or more unique identifiers is in the continuous data stream.~~

154. (Currently Amended) The method defined in claim 152 wherein:

the real-time action comprises displaying a program reminder for the particular television program; and

the method further comprises using the interactive television program guide to prefetch current program guide data from the continuous data stream when the reminder is displayed by the program guide.

155. (Currently Amended) The method defined in claim 152 wherein:

the real-time action comprises authorizing the viewing of the particular television program, wherein the program is a pay-per-view program; ~~and~~

~~the method further comprises using the interactive television program guide to authorize the viewing of a pay per view program when a particular unique identifier is in the continuous data stream.~~

156. (Currently Amended) The method defined in claim 152 wherein:

the real-time action comprises authorizing a viewing of the particular television program, wherein the program is a pay-per-view-program; and

the method further comprises using the interactive television program guide to prefetch current program guide data from the continuous data stream when the viewing of the pay-per-view program is authorized by the program guide.

157. (Currently Amended) The method defined in claim 152 wherein:

the real-time action comprises recording ~~[[a]]~~  
the particular television program; and

~~the method further comprises using the interactive television program guide to record a program when a particular unique identifier is in the continuous data stream.~~

158. (Currently Amended) The method defined in claim 152 wherein:

the real-time action comprises locking ~~[[a]]~~  
the particular television program and prompting a user for a control code; and

~~the method further comprises using the interactive television program guide to lock a program and~~

~~prompt the user for a control code when a particular  
identifier is in the continuous data stream.~~

159. (Currently Amended) The method defined in  
claim 152 wherein:

one or more of the ~~one or more~~ unique  
identifiers is a program grouping identifier; and  
the real-time action comprises displaying a  
program reminder for [[a]] the particular television program,  
wherein the program is of a program grouping; ~~and~~  
~~the method further comprises using the~~  
~~interactive television program guide to display the program~~  
~~reminder for the program of a program grouping when a~~  
~~particular unique identifier of the one or more unique~~  
~~identifiers is in the continuous data stream.~~

160. (Currently Amended) The method defined in  
claim 152 wherein:

one or more of the ~~one or more~~ unique  
identifiers is a program grouping identifier;  
the real-time action comprises displaying a  
program reminder for [[a]] the particular television program,  
wherein the program is of a program grouping; and  
the method further comprises using the  
interactive television program guide to prefetch current

program guide data from the continuous data stream when the reminder is displayed by the program guide.

161. (Currently Amended) The method defined in claim 152 wherein:

one or more of the ~~one or more~~ unique identifiers is a program grouping identifier; and

the real-time action comprises authorizing the viewing of the particular television program, wherein the program is a pay-per-view program of a program grouping; ~~and~~

~~the method further comprises using the interactive television program guide to authorize the viewing of a pay-per-view program of a program grouping when a particular unique identifier is in the continuous data stream.~~

162. (Currently Amended) The method defined in claim 152 wherein:

one or more of the ~~one or more~~ unique identifiers is a program grouping identifier;

the real-time action comprises authorizing a viewing of the particular television program, wherein the program is a pay-per-view-program of a program grouping; and

the method further comprises using the interactive television program guide to prefetch current program guide data from the continuous data stream when the

viewing of the pay-per-view program of a program grouping is authorized by the program guide.

163. (Currently Amended) The method defined in claim 152 wherein:

one or more of the ~~one or more~~ unique identifiers is a program grouping identifier;

the real-time action comprises recording [[a]] the particular television program, wherein the program is of a program grouping, and

~~the method further comprises using the interactive television program guide to record a program of a program grouping when a particular unique identifier is in the continuous data stream.~~

164. (Currently Amended) The method defined in claim 152 wherein:

one or more of the ~~one or more~~ unique identifiers is a program grouping identifier; and

the real-time action comprises locking [[a]] the particular television program of a program grouping and prompting a user for a control code, wherein the program is of a program grouping, and

~~the method further comprises using the interactive television program guide to lock a program of a~~

~~program grouping and prompt the user for a control code when a particular identifier is in the continuous data stream.~~

165-167. (Canceled)